

TENNESSEE SUPREME COURT



Justices	Jeff Bivins	Holly Kirby	Roger A. Page	Cornelia Clark	Sharon G. Lee
Confidence Score	Mild Republican	Mild Republican	Mild Republican	Mild Democrat	Mild Democrat
Opinion Partners					
Dissenting Minority					
Determining Majority					
Lone Dissenter					

- ▶ Number of justices: **5**
- ▶ Number of cases: **34**
- ▶ Percentage of cases with a unanimous ruling: **85.3% (29)**
- ▶ Justice most often writing the majority opinion: **Justice Clark (8)**
- ▶ Per curiam decisions: **3**
- ▶ Concurring opinions: **2**
- ▶ Justice with most concurring opinions: **Justice Kirby (2)**
- ▶ Dissenting opinions: **6**
- ▶ Justice with most dissenting opinions: **Justice Lee (3)**

COURT CONTENTION

Opinion partners/dissenting minority

In 2020, one case before the Tennessee Supreme Court was decided 3-2. In the only case decided by split decision Justices Clark and Lee were in the minority. In our *Ballotpedia Courts: State Partisanship* study Justices Clark and Lee recorded Mild Democratic Confidence Scores. They were the only two justices who recorded Democratic Confidence Scores on the Tennessee Supreme Court.

Determining majority

In the one case decided by split decision, Justices Bivins, Kirby, and Page were in the majority. Justice Kirby wrote a separate concurring opinion. In our *Ballotpedia Courts: State Partisanship* study, Justices Bivins, Kirby, and Page recorded Mild Republican Confidence Scores.

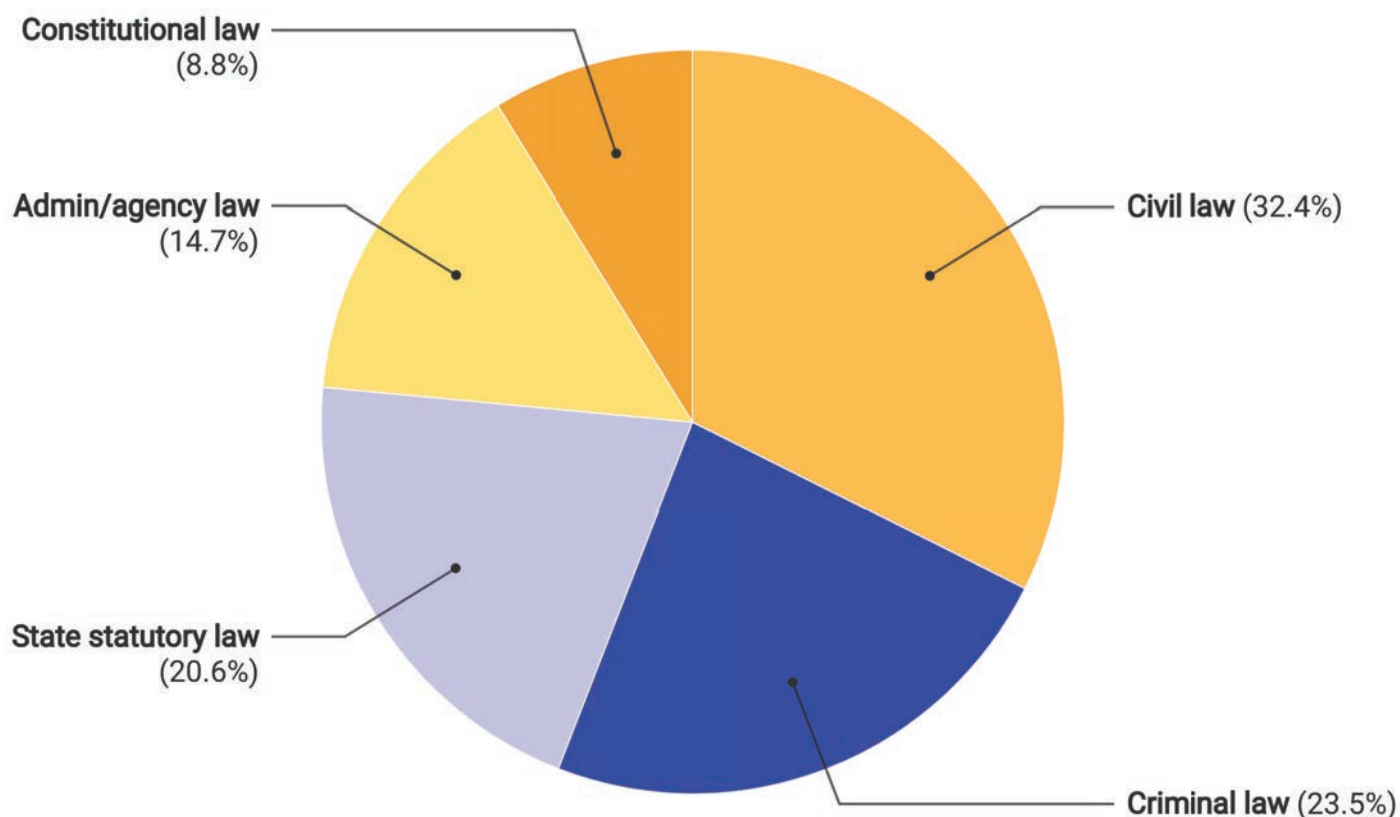
Lone dissenter

In 2020, no justice on the Tennessee Supreme Court dissented alone. Justice Kirby filed two opinions concurring in part and dissenting in part, which no other justices joined, and two concurring opinions which no other justices joined. Justice Lee filed two opinions concurring in part and dissenting in part which no other justices joined.

COURT JURISDICTION

The court hears appeals of civil and criminal cases from lower state courts, such as the Tennessee Court of Appeals and the Tennessee Court of Criminal Appeals. The supreme court may assume jurisdiction over undecided cases in the court of appeals or court of criminal appeals when a decision is needed on an emergency basis. The court also has appellate jurisdiction in cases involving state taxes, the right to hold public office, and issues of Constitutional Law.

Case types decided by Tennessee Supreme Court, 2020



BALLOTPEDIA

The most common cases heard by the Tennessee Supreme Court in 2020 were civil law cases. Of the 34 cases it heard, 11 were civil law cases, or 32.4 percent of its total caseload for the year. A civil case is one that involves a dispute between two parties, one of whom seeks reparations or damages.

The second most common cases that reached the supreme court were criminal law cases. A criminal case involves a final criminal appeal before the court of last resort. The Tennessee Supreme Court heard eight criminal law cases in 2020, or 23.5 percent of its total caseload for the year.

The third most common cases that reached the court were state statutory cases. A state statutory case involves the violation or enforcement of a state statute. The Tennessee Supreme Court heard seven state statutory law cases in 2020, or 20.6 percent of its total caseload for the year.